

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented vehicle repair claim processing method, comprising the steps of:

receiving repair claim data related to repair of a vehicle;

5 using repair claim expert rules to determine at least one response to the input repair claim data based upon the received input repair claim data,

said repair claim expert rules including repair claim-related premises and repair claim-related actions, wherein at least one of the repair claim-related premises uses the received repair claim data to determine whether a preselected repair claim-related action should be executed;

10 said preselected repair claim-related action being used to generate a repair claim-related response,

said expert rules being accessible by an user in a high level computer expression format.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the repair claim data includes dealer involved in the repair, vehicle identification number of the vehicle to be repaired, parts involved in the repair, and labor operation data.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
accessing a database to retrieve information related to the vehicle
to be repaired.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
using a plurality of repair claim-related expert rules to evaluate a
repair claim;

5 determining that at least one of the rules requires additional data
related to the repair;
accessing a database to retrieve the additional data.

5 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the repair claim data includes
dealer involved in the repair, vehicle identification number of the vehicle to be
repaired, parts involved in the repair, and labor operation data,
said labor operation data being indicative of the labor involved in
the repair,

said method further comprising the steps of:
using a plurality of repair claim-related expert rules to evaluate a
repair claim;
determining via the repair claim-related expert rules that an
10 inconsistency exists based upon the data regarding parts involved in the repair
and based upon the labor operation data.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the repair claim data includes warranty data related to the repair, said method further comprising the steps of:

using the plurality of repair claim-related expert rules to evaluate the warranty data related to the repair; and

5 providing a response to an user that is indicative of whether the repair is covered by warranty based upon evaluation by the repair claim-related expert rules.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

using a lower level representation of the repair claim-related expert rules when the at least one of the repair claim-related premises uses the received repair claim data to determine whether a preselected repair claim-related action

5 should be executed; and

displaying to an user the high level computer expression format of the repair claim-related expert rules.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the high level computer expression format of the repair claim-related rule is an English phrase, wherein the lower level representation of the repair claim-related rule is at least one line of programming code.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the programming code is C++ programming code.

10. A computer-implemented vehicle repair claim processing apparatus, comprising:

an input for receiving repair claim data related to repair of a vehicle;

claim expert rules to determine at least one response to the input

5 repair claim data based upon the received input repair claim data,

said repair claim expert rules including repair claim-related premises and repair claim-related actions, wherein at least one of the repair claim-related premises uses the received repair claim data to determine whether a preselected repair claim-related action should be executed;

10 said preselected repair claim-related action being used to generate a repair claim-related response,

said expert rules being accessible by an user in a high level computer expression format.

11. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the repair claim data includes dealer involved in the repair, vehicle identification number of the vehicle to be repaired, parts involved in the repair, and labor operation data.

12. The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising:

a database to retrieve information related to the vehicle to be repaired.

13. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein a plurality of repair claim-related expert rules evaluate a repair claim;

wherein at least one of the rules requires additional data related to the repair to evaluate the repair claim;

5 wherein a database retrieves the additional data.

14. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the repair claim data includes dealer involved in the repair, vehicle identification number of the vehicle to be repaired, parts involved in the repair, and labor operation data,

said labor operation data being indicative of the labor involved in
5 the repair,

wherein a plurality of repair claim-related expert rules evaluate a repair claim;

wherein the repair claim-related expert rules determine that an inconsistency exists based upon the data regarding parts involved in the repair
10 and based upon the labor operation data.

15. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the repair claim data includes warranty data related to the repair, wherein the plurality of repair claim-related expert rules evaluate the warranty data related to the repair; and

wherein a response is provided to an user that is indicative of
5 whether the repair is covered by warranty based upon evaluation by the repair claim-related expert rules.

16. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein a lower level representation of the repair claim-related expert rules is used when the at least one of the repair claim-related premises uses the received repair claim data to determine whether a preselected repair claim-related action should be executed;

5 and

wherein a computer terminal displays to an user the high level computer expression format of the repair claim-related expert rules.

17. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the high level computer expression format of the repair claim-related rule is an English phrase, wherein the lower level representation of the repair claim-related rule is at least one line of programming code.

18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the programming code is C++ programming code.